

Virtual participation in the UNFCCC process

- 1. Current status of virtual participation in the process**
- 2. “Asynchronous” virtual participation**
- 3. “Synchronous” virtual participation**
- 4. Next steps to increase use of synchronous forms**
- 5. Some social, technical and financial aspects**

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- Ongoing: asynchronous virtual participation
 - a) Webcast
 - b) Mobile.unfccc.int and the iPhone app “Negotiator”
 - c) Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube
 - d) Assistance to bloggers and other online communicators

- Use increasing: synchronous virtual participation
 - a) Telephone/Internet conferences (audio only)
 - b) Telephone/Internet conferences with web enhancements
 - c) Video/Internet conferences

UNFCCC already supports virtual participation

The screenshot displays the UNFCCC Virtual Participation website within a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The browser's address bar shows the URL http://unfccc.int/virtual_participation/items/5984.php. The website's header includes navigation links such as Home, CD, INet, and TT: Clear, along with utility links for RSS, Share, Sitemap, and Contact Us. The main content area is titled "Virtual Participation | UN Climate Change Conference June 2011" and features a "Recommend" button indicating that 5 people have recommended the page. The page is organized into several columns and sections:

- Left Navigation Menu:** Includes links for Conference Programme, Conference Documents, Side Events & Exhibits, Logistics, Media, and Virtual Participation. Below this is an "Issues Quickfinder" dropdown menu and buttons for "Bali Road Map: AWG-KP" and "AWG-LCA", and "Cancun Agreements".
- UNFCCC Live and On-demand webcast from UN Climate Change Conference June 2011:** A section displaying a grid of video thumbnails from the conference.
- UNFCCC YouTube - climateconference:** A section featuring a video player showing a UNFCCC press briefing.
- Updates on Twitter:** A section displaying tweets related to the conference, including mentions of alertnetclimate and Kphirah.
- UNFCCC Facebook - unfccc:** A section showing a Facebook page for UNFCCC.
- UNFCCC Twitter - UN_climate talks:** A section displaying a Twitter feed for UN_ClimateTalks.
- Connect via Facebook:** A section with a Facebook login button and a "Discuss this event" prompt.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, Google search, and several open applications including Mail, Draft Programme, and Budget 2011.



- UNFCCC webcast
 - a) **2,295,861 views** since 2004 of all UNFCCC sessions
 - b) **370, 568 views** of all CDM/EB, JISC, Compliance Committee meetings
 - c) **18,600 downloads** of the UNFCCC iPhone app
- Social media
 - a) **176,549 YouTube views**
 - b) **7,273 Facebook “friends”**
 - c) **14,417 followers** of Twitter/UNFCCC (2008)
 - d) **1,735 followers** of Twitter/CFigueres (2011)



Synchronous virtual participation: in place and next steps

IN PLACE

- Secretariat uses VoIP conference call rooms for small, official meetings
- Secretariat uses ISDN Video conferencing
- COP15/CMP6 Danish/Cisco project put in place “Telepresence” Global Climate Change Meeting Platform linking 77 countries

NEXT STEPS

- Virtual_Participation@UNFCCC exhibit 6-8 June 2011 showcases current possibilities
 - Secretariat pilot project in 2011 will test telephone conferencing system with web enhancements, especially for CDM
 - Exploration of telephone/video options for COP17/CMP7 side events and digital media centre to have interactive functionality, especially for observer organizations, in addition to ongoing asynchronous social media tools
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Social, technical and financial aspects of virtual communication

SOCIAL

- Advanced planning, including technical requirements
- Take into account time-zones of participants
- Meeting format needs to be more structured
- Chairs or moderators need to be proactive
- Brevity and precision in presenting information is important in a virtual meeting

TECHNICAL

- Openness to new forms of communications for information exchange
- Access to hands-free telephone or computer with “VoIP” telephone technology and headset and/or webcam
- Access to installed video conference facilities

FINANCIAL

- Reliable virtual participation technologies may require purchasing of licenses and equipment
- Use of virtual technologies may have impacts on the cost of Internet access

” Virtual participation will, ideally, allow all countries fairer access to all sessions, workshops and side events. A greater number of Party delegates, participants from civil society and other observer organizations, will be able to attend and participate, free of both cost and venue constraints. As some or all participants remain in their offices, these participants may discuss and seek input from colleagues, allowing more input to and involvement in crafting responses. The availability of invited speakers is greatly increased, potentially adding a whole new dimension to side events.